

expressly concerned about equalization aid that I don't think it did hardly anything to impact equalization aid at all, at least the two things that are, were in the green copy of 676. The two things that are in the green copy of 676 are some personnel, the resolution...a way to resolve personnel problems that can arise in a reorganization and a provision for providing grants to schools who are interested in reorganization and want to study the issue and find out whether it is something that will work for them. The grant portion is very modest. It allows up to \$5,000 for a grant. You get \$2,500 to start, you get \$2,500 when you finish. I don't know how many schools would take advantage of that, but I think that would have probably a very modest cost. The other provision in LB 676 I think addresses a very, very real problem in the reorganization, particularly of small schools, and that is what happens to the certificated employees in that reorganization. If a reorganization results in fewer staff in the combined schools, somebody has to go. And those can be very, very hard decisions for school boards and the people in the communities to make that decision. Those people may have been in the school system for a long time, they're related to people, they're good people, nobody wants to see them lose their job. And I think we'd all feel the same way if we were put in that situation. Essentially what the green copy of 676 did was give school boards the ability to offer those folks alternatives. One of the alternatives amounts to a kind of early retirement. One of them amounts to a stipend, or is a stipend for professional development. In other words, if these folks want to go back to school and they want to retrain to do something else or to do another function in the schools, give them the opportunity to do that. But it allows school boards to provide those kinds of assistance to the personnel who might be affected by a reorganization. It is an authority that the school boards currently do not have. As I recall the hearing, the school boards supported the proposal, the administrators supported the proposal, the teachers supported the proposal because it is a way to deal with human, real human problems. The bill also creates some incentives, if you will, to exercise the options that are available by providing a mechanism for allocating the staff in reorganized schools, in the new school, but it does give persons who might be affected a substantial incentive to make a decision either to utilize the staff development portion of the bill or potentially the early retirement provision. So that's what it does...